

WRITTEN // BY LEILA MOUMOUNI-TCHOUASSI  
RACIAL JUSTICE EXPERT

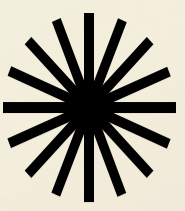


DESIGNED // BY  
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24'

# GUIDE TO EMBARKING ON THE AEDIJ JOURNEY

ANTI-RACIST COOPERATION





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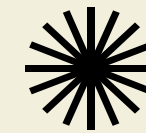
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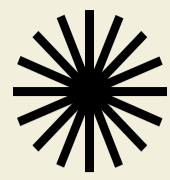
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# INTRODUCTION

This guide offers a comprehensive framework designed to help organizations establish a robust foundation in their journey toward fostering a culture of Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Justice (AEDIJ). By emphasizing community-centered strategies, the guide empowers individuals and creates environments where transformative change can thrive. Embarking on an AEDIJ journey is a transformative, long-term commitment that empowers organizations to create inclusive and resilient communities. By following these steps, organizations can lay the groundwork for deep, sustainable change, enabling them to adapt, grow, and lead in building equitable environments enabling them to innovate beyond measure; Key objectives include:

## ● PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

### **Empowering Staff**

Equip your team with the knowledge and tools to take informed, impactful steps toward sustainability in AEDIJ initiatives.

### **Facilitating Deep Transformation**

Encourage intentional questioning and exploration to seamlessly integrate AEDIJ into the organizational structure, resulting in holistic and enduring change.

### **Strengthening Organizational Resilience**

Prepare your organization to adapt and excel in an ever-changing world through equitable and inclusive practices.

## ✿ SCOPE

This guide encompasses a series of essential steps organizations need to explore before determining the direction and actions that will embed AEDIJ into their operational fabric. It focuses on approaches that:

### **Empower Communities**

Foster strong, inclusive communities within the organization that drive and sustain AEDIJ efforts.

### **Align with Organizational Mission**

Ensure AEDIJ initiatives are in harmony with the broader goals of creating equitable and inclusive workplaces.

### **Promote Sustainable Growth**

Provide strategies that support long-term AEDIJ success, avoiding superficial or short-term fixes.

## ✦ AUDIENCE

This guide is crafted for a diverse range of individuals committed to advancing AEDIJ within their organizations, including:

### **Leaders and Executives**

Individuals responsible for setting strategic directions and fostering an inclusive organizational culture.

### **HR Professionals**

Experts tasked with implementing and managing AEDIJ policies, recruitment, and employee development.

### **AEDIJ Champions**

Advocates and facilitators who drive AEDIJ initiatives and inspire others within the organization.

### **All Staff Members**

Employees at every level who play a role in strengthening organizational values through community-led transformation.

By catering to these audiences, the guide supports anyone involved in enhancing organizational values through collaborative and innovative AEDIJ strategies, ensuring a sustainable and impactful journey toward equity and inclusion.

# 1 ASSESS ORGANIZATIONAL *READINESS* AND NEEDS

Understanding the current state of the organization is a critical first step toward building a transformative AEDIJ journey. By examining existing practices, capacities, and attitudes, organizations can ensure that their approach is relevant, informed, and effective. This foundational assessment will help pinpoint areas of strength, growth opportunities, and potential challenges. This holistic approach to assessing readiness is adaptable for organizations, providing a clear, thorough, and actionable foundation for beginning a meaningful AEDIJ journey.



## CONDUCT AN AEDIJ AUDIT

### **Gather Insights Across the Organization**

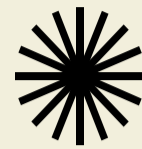
Use surveys, focus groups, and interviews to collect feedback on current AEDIJ practices, culture, staff experiences, and aspirations. Encourage open and honest responses that reflect the diversity of experiences within the organization.

### **Understand Capacity and Readiness for AEDIJ Work**

Assess the organization's current capabilities, including staffing, policies, and resource allocation. Go beyond simple metrics to understand the genuine willingness and preparedness for transformative change, this will include attitudes and culture.

### **Incorporate Inclusive, Community-Centered Methods**

Use community circles, invite respected elders, and incorporate traditional knowledge-sharing practices where appropriate. This fosters an environment of trust and inclusivity while respecting cultural values and principles.



## IDENTIFY KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCE GAPS

### **Assess Existing Resources and Needs**

Evaluate current staffing, policy frameworks, budgeting allocations, and existing AEDIJ expertise. Look into areas like programming, communications, partnerships, and future planning.

### **Consider the Broader Operational Scope**

Think about how AEDIJ principles can impact each area of the organization, including fundraising, membership strategies, internal structures, and external collaborations.

### **Analyze Funding and Structural Realities**

Examine budget flexibility, available support systems, and other financial resources that may impact the feasibility of your AEDIJ goals.



## STEPS TO ASSESS ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS



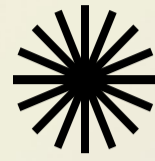
## EVALUATE READINESS FOR CHANGE AND POTENTIAL RESISTANCE

### **Analyze Organizational Willingness and Commitment**

Reflect on how deeply the organization is committed to AEDIJ principles, not as a trend but as a long-term, moral imperative. True commitment requires an innovative, community-centered, and anti-oppressive stance that challenges existing norms and addresses historical inequities.

### **Identify Areas of Support and Resistance**

Map out areas where there may be buy-in versus potential resistance. This can help guide conversations, address concerns proactively, and ensure a more cohesive approach to AEDIJ.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO GUIDE ASSESSMENT

### **Understanding AEDIJ Terms and Values**

What do terms like anti-racism, equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice mean to us, throughout our organization, and how capable are we of fully integrating these concepts into our principles and practices?

Where do we see alignment between our values and practices and AEDIJ principles, and where might we need to adjust?

### **Capacity for Transformation**

What are we willing—and not willing—to change in our programming, budgeting, and internal practices to align with AEDIJ values?

Do we have the necessary resources, knowledge, and support to embed AEDIJ meaningfully across all levels?

### **Points of Connection and Divergence**

How do staff perspectives, experiences, and understanding of AEDIJ vary within the organization?

Where do common goals exist, and where might there be differences in interpretation or commitment?



# NEXT STEPS

## **Form an AEDIJ Committee or Working Group**

Assemble a cross-functional team to lead the assessment, representing diverse perspectives within the organization. This group will play a pivotal role in guiding initial strategies, building buy-in, and fostering a unified approach to AEDIJ.

## **Document Findings and Share Insights**

Compile the results from the audit and share a high-level summary with the broader organization. Transparency in this early stage is imperative and builds trust and sets the stage for shared ownership of AEDIJ efforts.

## **Develop an Action Plan for Addressing Gaps**

Based on the assessment, outline initial strategies that address key gaps, strengthen areas of alignment, and prepare the organization for the next stages of AEDIJ transformation.

# 2

## **BUILD AN *INCLUSIVE* FOUNDATION THROUGH TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS**

Creating an AEDIJ-aligned culture begins with building strong, trust-based relationships, first among staff and then extending to partners, stakeholders, and program participants. Many organizations operate within hierarchical structures that prioritize order, conformity, and compliance over trust, care, and intentionality. These traditional structures can hinder the meaningful integration of AEDIJ principles. Building a truly inclusive culture requires examining existing norms and adopting approaches that prioritize trust, collaboration, and mutual respect, creating an environment ready for transformation.



## FOSTER OPEN DIALOGUE

### Create Safe and Varied Engagement Spaces

Ensure that staff can share experiences and concerns freely, fostering an environment of safety and respect. Consider establishing different formats—such as closed groups, community-led forums, and peer circles—to accommodate diverse comfort levels and engagement styles.

### Provide Support

#### Systems Within Engagement Spaces

Ensure that each dialogue space has relevant support resources, such as mental health or peer support, to help staff feel safe and valued.

### Ensure Diverse

#### Opportunities for Participation

Use multiple engagement channels (e.g. in-person, virtual, anonymous) to allow for a range of voices and insights, including those who may have different capacities or comfort levels.



## KEY STEPS TO BUILDING TRUST AND INCLUSIVITY



### PROMOTE PEER MENTORSHIP AND EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS (ERGS)

#### Support Employee-Led Initiatives

Encourage and resource ERGs focused on shared identities and experiences, providing platforms where employees can connect, support each other, and advocate for their communities.

#### Establish Peer Mentorship Programs

Empower staff to support each other's growth through mentorship and allyship, building a network of support that enhances trust and fosters collective growth.

#### Resource ERGs for Impactful Engagement

Ensure that ERGs are adequately funded and supported, allowing them to organize, connect, and contribute meaningfully to the organization's AEDIJ journey.





## EMPOWER COMMUNITY INPUT AND PARTICIPATION

### **Involve Staff in Decision-Making**

Regularly invite staff to contribute to decision-making processes. This shared ownership fosters accountability and commitment to AEDIJ principles.

### **Flatten Hierarchies for Authentic Engagement**

Adopt structures that encourage collaboration across organizational levels, challenging traditional hierarchies that can stifle innovation and inclusivity.

### **Engage All Levels in AEDIJ Planning**

Encourage each department or team to contribute insights on how AEDIJ can enhance their specific work areas, building a holistic approach that integrates AEDIJ into all facets of the organization. Ensure meaningful integration.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS TO GUIDE INCLUSIVITY BUILDING

### **Meaningful Inclusion**

How do we currently include staff voices in our organizational decisions and culture-building efforts? Where can we improve?

Who makes up our organization, and how well do we understand the diverse identities and experiences within it?

### **Trust and Engagement**

How can we strengthen relationships across different organizational levels?

Can our staff trust us to fully commit to AEDIJ principles? How can we build and sustain that trust?

### **Support for Underrepresented Groups**

What support systems (e.g. mentorship, ERGs, or accessible engagement spaces) do we have or need to empower underrepresented groups?

How do we prioritize and practice trust-building in all aspects of our organizational culture?



## NEXT STEPS

### Schedule Regular Community-Building Activities

Organize consistent activities, like lunch-and-learns, cultural celebrations, or peer-led workshops, to strengthen relationships and build inclusivity.

### Host Routine Feedback Sessions

Implement regular feedback sessions, allowing staff to share their experiences, challenges, and ideas. Use this feedback to adjust organizational practices and demonstrate the organization's commitment to continuous improvement.

### Empower Staff as Change Agents

Encourage staff at all levels to take on roles that align with their skills and desired areas of growth, fostering a culture where everyone is responsible for promoting and sustaining inclusivity in collective ways.

# 3 ESTABLISH TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Building a successful AEDIJ journey requires transparent and accountable practices to earn trust and demonstrate genuine organizational commitment and resilience. After understanding the organizational landscape and building trust with staff, partners, and stakeholders, the next phase involves implementing structured and clear approaches to transparency and accountability. These practices go beyond jargon; they are essential, strategic elements of a sustainable AEDIJ framework. A structured approach to transparency and accountability equips organizations with actionable steps to maintain trust, ensure alignment with AEDIJ goals, and support continuous growth. By embedding these practices, organizations can demonstrate a deep commitment to AEDIJ principles, positioning themselves as both responsible and innovative leaders in their sectors.



## SET CLEAR AEDIJ OBJECTIVES

### Define Short- and Long-Term Goals

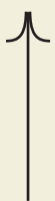
Collaboratively establish goals that align with both AEDIJ principles and the organization's core values. These objectives should be specific, measurable, and reflective of the organization's current capabilities and future aspirations.

### Involve All Stakeholders in Goal-Setting

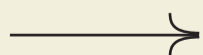
By engaging staff, leaders, and partners in defining AEDIJ objectives, you create shared ownership and a collective commitment. Inclusive goal-setting is crucial for building meaningful and sustainable buy-in.

### Build on Trust to Strengthen Buy-In

Use the trust developed in previous stages to establish objectives that feel authentic and achievable. Clearly communicate how these objectives will shape the organization's transformation journey.



## KEY STEPS TO ESTABLISH TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY



## REPORT PROGRESS AND ENGAGE IN OPEN DIALOGUE

### Share Regular Updates

Provide consistent updates on AEDIJ progress, including successes, challenges, and shifts in priorities or capacities. Transparency about setbacks or evolving priorities demonstrates authenticity and commitment.

### Encourage an Open Dialogue on Challenges and Achievements

Create opportunities for staff to discuss the organization's AEDIJ journey, including hurdles and accomplishments. This fosters a sense of collective ownership and reinforces the organization's commitment to AEDIJ.

### Build a Feedback

#### Loop for Continuous Improvement

Use these reporting sessions to invite feedback on AEDIJ initiatives, making adjustments as necessary. An open feedback loop shows staff that their voices are valued and that AEDIJ work is a continuous, collaborative process.



## CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURES

### **Designate AEDIJ Champions and Teams**

Appoint AEDIJ champions within various teams or departments who will support keeping track of progress and advocate for AEDIJ principles. These champions act as accountability leaders and when properly supported can help foster a culture of shared responsibility.

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## REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR BUILDING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### **Metrics and Measurement**

What metrics or points of curiosity will best help us measure AEDIJ progress and impact?

How can we ensure these metrics are fair, relevant, and aligned with our goals?

### **Leadership Accountability**

As leaders, are we holding ourselves accountable to resource and protect our staff adequately? If not, why?

Are we committed to creating a workplace where staff can bring their authentic selves safely and be empowered to engage meaningfully?

### **Develop Policies and Metrics for Accountability**

Establish clear policies that hold everyone—from leadership to individual contributors—accountable to AEDIJ commitments. Use quantitative and qualitative metrics and regular reviews to track progress, and identify areas for improvement.

### **Regularly Review and Adapt Accountability Practices**

Periodically review accountability structures to ensure they are effective and relevant. Communicate any changes to policies or practices to maintain trust and transparency with all stakeholders.

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### **Organizational Willingness and Boundaries**

What are we willing to be held accountable to, and where have we chosen to set boundaries? Why?

Where does the line of transparency lie, and how will we uphold transparency as a priority consistently?

### **Structure and Processes for Accountability**

How can we build systems that ensure accountability and transparency are upheld across all levels?

How will we ensure these structures evolve as we make progress in our AEDIJ journey?



# NEXT STEPS

## Develop a Consistent Reporting System

Create a reporting system that includes regular updates on progress, setbacks, and shifts in AEDIJ priorities. Schedule routine AEDIJ briefings to keep all staff and stakeholders informed.

## Facilitate Open

### Dialogues and Feedback Mechanisms

Create a reporting system that includes regular updates on progress, setbacks, and shifts in AEDIJ priorities. Schedule routine AEDIJ briefings to keep all staff and stakeholders informed.

## Integrate Accountability Checkpoints

Build AEDIJ check-ins into leadership reviews, staff evaluations, and organizational meetings. Regularly assess if the organization is meeting its AEDIJ commitments and make adjustments as needed.

# 4

## COMMUNICATE INTENTIONS, GOALS, AND PROGRESS EFFECTIVELY

Strategic communication is essential to foster trust, engagement, and alignment with AEDIJ objectives. In AEDIJ work, communication and engagement go hand-in-hand, ensuring that staff are informed, involved, and empowered to actively participate. Clear, intentional communication helps align everyone with AEDIJ goals and encourages meaningful contributions, feedback, and collaboration. A structured approach to AEDIJ communication is adaptable, supporting organizations in fostering transparent, inclusive, and meaningful engagement. By establishing clear, accessible, and responsive communication practices, organizations can sustain trust, align goals, and inspire active participation throughout their AEDIJ journey.



## USE DIVERSE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

### **Ensure Accessibility Across Levels and Functions**

Use a variety of relevant communication styles and methods—emails, meetings, dashboards, internal networks, and digital notice boards—to ensure messages reach all staff, regardless of location or role.

### **Create Consistent and Visible Updates**

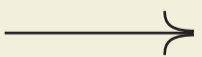
Use dashboards or internal portals that provide real-time updates on AEDIJ progress, upcoming activities, and relevant resources and allows staff to engage. This transparency reinforces trust and accountability.

### **Offer Anonymous Feedback Channels**

Provide options for anonymous feedback so staff can share insights or concerns without fear of repercussions, creating a safe and open line of communication.



## KEY STEPS FOR EFFECTIVE AEDIJ COMMUNICATION



## CRAFT A STORY-DRIVEN COMMUNICATION PLAN

### **Connect to AEDIJ as an Ongoing Journey**

Share the organization's AEDIJ goals, milestones, and stories of impact as a journey toward continuous improvement. When staff observe AEDIJ as a shared journey, they may feel more empowered to contribute their skills, identify areas for growth, and align their personal and professional goals with organizational progress.

### **Connect Goals to Broader Organizational Values**

Link AEDIJ objectives to the organization's mission, core values, and work reinforcing that AEDIJ is integral to the organization's identity, long-term vision and success.

### **Encourage Staff to See Their Role in the Journey**

Highlight how each team member contributes to AEDIJ initiatives and objectives, inspiring a sense of ownership and shared responsibility.



## HOST OPEN Q&A SESSIONS AND RESOURCE FORUMS

### **Invite Questions and Offer Support Resources**

Regularly schedule open Q&A sessions where staff can ask questions, voice concerns, and offer ideas. This approach fosters a transparent environment and allows leaders to clarify goals and next steps.

### **Provide Targeted AEDIJ Resources**

Equip staff with resources to engage meaningfully with AEDIJ initiatives relative to their work, capacity to engage, and/or interests. This can include AEDIJ-focused training sessions, change management workshops, and community-building spaces.

### **Follow Up on Feedback**

Acknowledge and act on the feedback received in Q&A sessions. Let staff know how their input has been used to shape decisions or refine transformation goals, reinforcing the value of their voices.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

### **Inclusivity and Reach**

Are we reaching and meaningfully engaging all audiences within the organization? Are we using accessible language and methods for diverse cultures, experiences, needs and preferences?

How can we ensure our communication plan is comprehensive, responsive, and attuned to our audience's needs?

### **Honesty and Consistency**

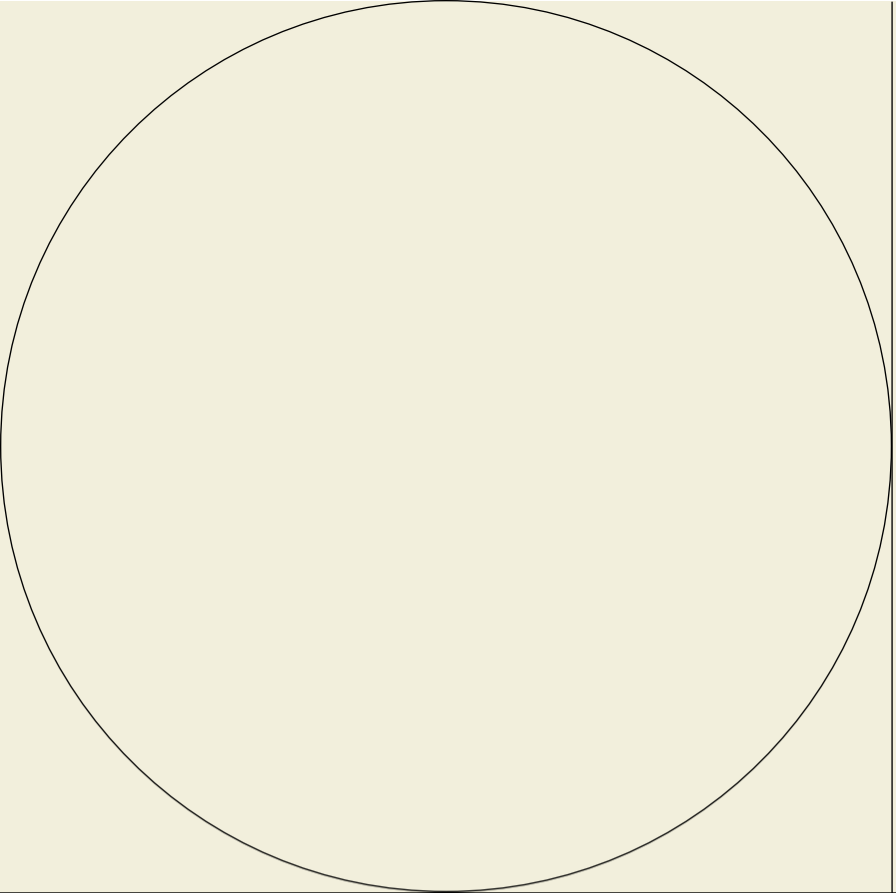
Are we communicating honestly, and are we prepared to deliver on our commitments?

Are we aligning our communications with the real-time progress of our AEDIJ efforts, and are we clear about any limitations or shifts?

### **Alignment with Feedback**

How does our messaging align with feedback we've received from staff and partners? Are we creating a feedback loop that continually improves our communication strategy and transformation journey?

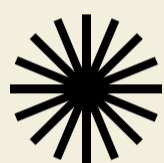
How are we holding ourselves accountable to what we communicate, and how are we managing potential misalignments or unmet expectations?



### **Emotional and Intellectual Resonance**

Are we framing AEDIJ communications in a way that resonates emotionally and intellectually, making them compelling and relevant for all staff?

How are we inspiring staff to connect personally to AEDIJ objectives, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose?



## **NEXT STEPS**

### **Schedule Consistent**

#### **Updates and Storytelling Sessions**

Regularly share AEDIJ updates through email newsletters, team meetings, or an internal network dedicated to AEDIJ progress. Use storytelling to connect AEDIJ efforts to real staff experiences, challenges, and successes.

### **Integrate Feedback**

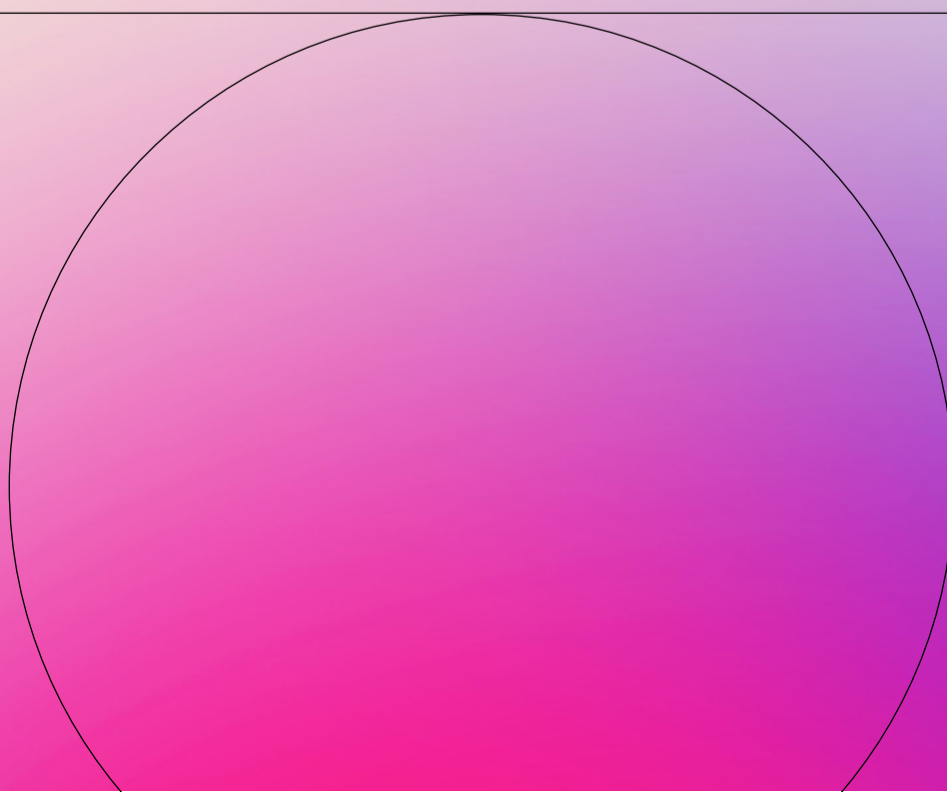
#### **Mechanisms into Communication**

Establish ongoing feedback opportunities, such as anonymous surveys, suggestion boxes, and informal discussion groups. Use this feedback to continuously refine communication methods, aligning them with organizational growth and AEDIJ goals.

### **Empower AEDIJ**

#### **Champions as Communication Facilitators**

Designate AEDIJ champions to act as additional communication points within each team, ensuring messages are shared and reinforced across the organization, encouraging two-way engagement.





# 5

## THOUGHTFULLY ENGAGE STAFF AND ADDRESS CHALLENGES

Engaging staff in AEDIJ efforts requires sensitivity, commitment, and a genuine curiosity about their perspectives.

For AEDIJ initiatives to succeed, organizations must understand potential barriers to engagement and address underlying issues that may have affected staff buy-in. Often, factors like unaddressed harm, inconsistent prioritization of AEDIJ, or a lack of resources and support for safe environments can lead to disengagement. These challenges not only impact AEDIJ efforts but also affect workplace culture, productivity, and staff retention. This approach provides a clear, adaptable path for engaging staff and addressing challenges with sensitivity and resilience. By fostering a caring, inclusive, collaborative environment, organizations can strengthen AEDIJ engagement, reinforce their commitment to positive change, and build a work culture that values each person's contribution.



### CREATE LEARNING CIRCLES AND WORKSHOPS

**Develop Safe, Open Spaces for Learning and Discussion**  
Offer regular learning circles or workshops focused on AEDIJ topics and beyond, where staff can explore, validate, and share their own experiences. These sessions should prioritize safety and openness, encouraging honest discussions about both positive and challenging experiences with AEDIJ and organizational engagement.

### KEY STEPS FOR THOUGHTFUL STAFF ENGAGEMENT AND CHALLENGE MANAGEMENT



## Leverage Internal

### Expertise Before Outsourcing

Recognize and validate internal staff expertise in AEDIJ and overall strategic transformation processes. Before hiring external consultants, engage with staff who may have valuable knowledge and lived experience. This not only respects internal talent but fosters a sense of inclusion and acknowledgment.

### Cultivate Curiosity and Continuous Learning

Encourage participants to approach each session with curiosity, allowing them to expand their understanding of AEDIJ as it relates to their roles and the broader organizational mission.



## ENCOURAGE CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION ON AEDIJ INITIATIVES

### Integrate AEDIJ Across All Departments

Involve staff from various departments in AEDIJ projects to break down silos and ensure that AEDIJ principles are woven throughout all organizational functions. AEDIJ should not exist in isolation; it's a tool to deepen engagement, innovation, collaboration, and organizational impact.

### Empower Staff as

#### Co-Creators in AEDIJ Efforts

Enable each department to find ways to integrate AEDIJ into its processes, making it an essential part of day-to-day operations. This collaborative approach fosters a culture where AEDIJ becomes integral to the organization's success.

### Promote Interdepartmental AEDIJ Projects

Encourage initiatives that bring together staff from different functions, fostering collaboration and diverse perspectives on AEDIJ challenges and opportunities.



## ADDRESS RESISTANCE WITH EMPATHY AND CURIOSITY

### Recognize

#### Resistance as Part of the Process

Understand that resistance often stems from past experiences or unmet expectations. Approach resistance with empathy and curiosity, recognizing it as an opportunity to learn about and address the concerns of your staff.

#### Use Open Dialogue to Explore Concerns

Host forums where staff can openly share their apprehensions. Many staff may have experienced prior AEDIJ efforts that lacked follow-through, resulting in disillusionment. Empathetic listening and action can help rebuild trust and highlight the organization's resilience and commitment to sustained AEDIJ work.

#### Build Resilience in AEDIJ Efforts

Show staff that the organization is prepared to sustain AEDIJ efforts long-term, even when challenges arise. Consistent follow-through on initiatives demonstrates commitment and can help overcome resistance.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR ENGAGING STAFF AND ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

### Supporting and Resourcing Staff

What resources and support systems can we offer to help staff engage meaningfully in AEDIJ work, especially when challenges arise?

How are we empowering staff as co-creators in AEDIJ efforts, allowing them to take ownership and contribute their unique perspectives?

### Validating Internal Expertise

Are we fully utilizing the knowledge and experience of our existing staff before bringing in external experts? How can we better recognize and validate this expertise?

How are we prepared to help staff develop and use their AEDIJ skills?



# NEXT STEPS

## Host Regular

### Workshops and Feedback Sessions

Schedule recurring workshops and feedback sessions to create a culture of shared responsibility and continuous improvement. These should be safe spaces for discussing challenges, generating ideas, and celebrating progress.

## Establish Support

### Structures for AEDIJ Engagement

Develop mentorship programs, peer support groups, and other resources to ensure staff feel supported as they engage with AEDIJ. These structures reinforce the organization's commitment to staff well-being and growth.

## Build Flexibility into AEDIJ Plans

Accept that AEDIJ is an evolving journey, and be ready to pivot based on staff feedback and emerging needs. This adaptability demonstrates a genuine commitment to fostering an inclusive, sustainable AEDIJ culture.

## Managing Resistance Thoughtfully

What systems do we have in place to meet resistance with empathy and curiosity, rather than with defensiveness?

How do we ensure that resistance is addressed constructively, and that staff feel safe expressing their concerns?

## Commitment to Engagement

What does “thoughtful engagement” mean to us under each principle of AEDIJ? How does it reflect the needs and values of the communities affected by these initiatives?

How are we prepared to adapt if our AEDIJ efforts don't initially resonate with all staff?

# 6

## MANAGE GAPS, SETBACKS, AND SUSTAIN MOMENTUM

AEDIJ work is a long-term commitment that requires resilience, adaptability, and a proactive approach to challenges.

Organizations may face internal barriers such as limited resources, capacity, or willingness to challenge norms. However, a strong commitment to sustaining momentum—even in the face of setbacks—demonstrates dedication to AEDIJ principles and strengthens organizational culture. Effective AEDIJ work includes building structures that address gaps, celebrate progress, and promote continuous growth. This structured approach enables organizations to stay proactive and resilient in their AEDIJ journey. By managing gaps, embracing setbacks as learning opportunities, and sustaining momentum through recognition and innovation, organizations can embed AEDIJ into their culture and continually evolve toward a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment.



## ACKNOWLEDGE PROGRESS AND SETBACKS OPENLY

### Recognize Setbacks as Learning Opportunities

Understand that setbacks are inevitable in AEDIJ work, but provide valuable insights. By openly acknowledging these challenges, organizations can refine strategies and build resilience across teams.

### Maintain Transparency with Staff

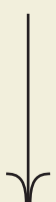
Keep staff informed of both achievements and setbacks to maintain trust and reinforce that AEDIJ work is ongoing. Transparency about setbacks signals a commitment to the process and a respect for collective input.

### Define and Communicate Success

Share progress updates regularly to help staff understand how success is defined by the organization and to celebrate milestones. Clear definitions of progress help align the organization's vision with actionable steps.



## KEY STEPS TO MANAGING GAPS, SETBACKS, AND SUSTAINING MOMENTUM



## CELEBRATE INCREMENTAL WINS

### Regularly Recognize Achievements

Celebrate milestones, no matter how small, to sustain motivation and reinforce AEDIJ progress. Recognizing staff and partners who contribute to these wins builds morale and reinforces a sense of collective ownership.

### Create a Culture of Acknowledgment

Make celebration an organizational habit by highlighting both individual and team contributions to AEDIJ goals internally and externally. This can include team shout-outs, awards, or simple acknowledgments in meetings.

### Use Wins to Reinvigorate Commitment

Use these achievements as reminders of the progress being made by the team and the positive impact AEDIJ work has on the organization. This boosts morale and helps sustain long-term engagement.



## SUPPORT DEPARTMENTAL INNOVATIONS AND AEDIJ-DRIVEN INITIATIVES

### Encourage Departments to Lead Initiatives

Empower each department to propose AEDIJ-focused projects, fostering a sense of ownership and relevance. This decentralized approach keeps AEDIJ work dynamic and tailored to the unique needs and interests of different areas within the organization.

### Enable Cross-Departmental Collaboration

Facilitate collaboration between departments to share insights and resources, strengthening the integration of AEDIJ principles across functions.

### Reward Creative Solutions

Recognize departments that bring innovative AEDIJ ideas to life. This support for innovation helps departments feel that AEDIJ work is relevant to their goals and encourages continued engagement.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR SUSTAINING MOMENTUM

### Learning from Setbacks

What can we learn from recent challenges, and how can we adjust our approach accordingly?

How can we proactively anticipate and address potential obstacles to avoid disruptions?

### Maintaining Momentum with Flexibility

How can we stay adaptable in our AEDIJ efforts while ensuring steady progress?

What does “keeping momentum” mean at all levels of the organization, and how can we foster it?

### Addressing Gaps and Building Capacity

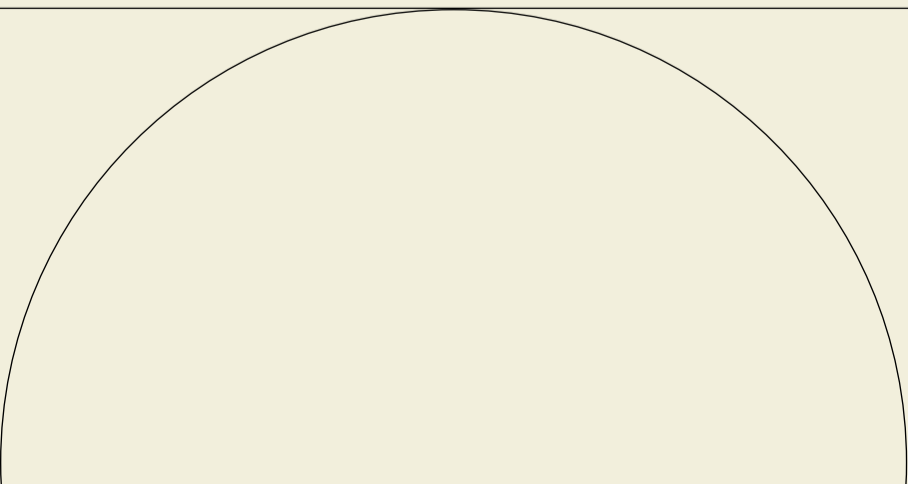
What gaps in resources, knowledge, or structures have been revealed through our AEDIJ assessment?

How are we addressing gaps that may affect staff’s sense of safety, belonging, or engagement?

### Empowering Innovation Across Departments

How can we encourage departments to integrate AEDIJ principles into their unique functions?

Are there processes in place to support and sustain innovative AEDIJ-driven initiatives?





# NEXT STEPS

## Build a Culture that Values Continuous Progress

Regularly acknowledge progress, share lessons from setbacks, and encourage open dialogue about challenges. Reinforce the idea that AEDIJ work is a journey, with each small win contributing to long-term transformation.

## Encourage

### Departmental and Team Innovations

Develop a framework that allows departments to propose and lead AEDIJ-focused projects. This can include budget support, training resources, and regular opportunities for cross-departmental idea-sharing.

## Create Regular

### AEDIJ Updates and Celebratory Moments

Schedule consistent updates on AEDIJ progress, whether in team meetings, newsletters, or intranet posts. Make time to celebrate achievements publicly to reinforce a collective commitment to AEDIJ.

# 7

## *PREPARE* TO HIRE AN AEDIJ SPECIALIST

Hiring an AEDIJ specialist is a significant step that requires careful planning to ensure success and sustainability.

AEDIJ roles carry heavy and complex responsibilities, from navigating organizational expectations and dynamics and systemic barriers to addressing varied skill levels, emotions around change, potential setbacks and so much more. For an AEDIJ hire to succeed, the organization must create an environment that supports their vision, values, and efforts. This preparation includes clearly defining the role, securing leadership support, allocating necessary resources, and fostering an organizational culture that empowers the AEDIJ specialist to drive meaningful change. It is equally important to avoid placing the entire weight of AEDIJ transformation on one person or a small team, as this can lead to burnout and limit the role's effectiveness. Consider the contributions needed from various departments, such as finance, communications, policy, programming, and evaluation, to support an AEDIJ-aligned culture.





## CLARIFY OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE ROLE

### Define Clear Yet Flexible Goals and Responsibilities

Set specific, actionable objectives for the AEDIJ role while allowing flexibility for the individual to adapt their vision based on organizational needs. Create space for the AEDIJ hire to co-create their path, balancing organizational goals with new insights and ideas.

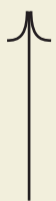
### Establish Clear Boundaries and Resources

Identify both the scope and limitations of the role, ensuring the AEDIJ specialist has a realistic workload and support system. This helps to avoid overburdening them and ensures sustainable contributions.

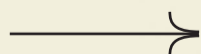
### Encourage

#### Co-Creation and Mutual Commitment

Foster an environment where the AEDIJ hire feels empowered to challenge norms and bring innovative ideas. Be prepared for their vision to evolve, and support them in bringing it to life, even if it diverges from initial expectations.



## KEY STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL AEDIJ HIRE



## ENSURE LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

### Secure Active Support from Leadership

Leadership buy-in is essential for AEDIJ initiatives to succeed. Leaders should be prepared to visibly support the AEDIJ hires work and reinforce AEDIJ goals in both word and action.

### Allocate Adequate Resources for Success

Ensure that the AEDIJ specialist has access to necessary resources, including budget, staff, and tools to implement AEDIJ initiatives effectively. Resource allocation should be aligned with the organization's commitment to AEDIJ, demonstrating genuine support.

### Prepare Leadership for Consistent Engagement

Leadership should be ready to engage continuously with AEDIJ efforts, providing guidance, support, and resources. This commitment reinforces the organization's dedication to long-term change.



## DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE ONBOARDING AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS

### Create a Structured Onboarding Program

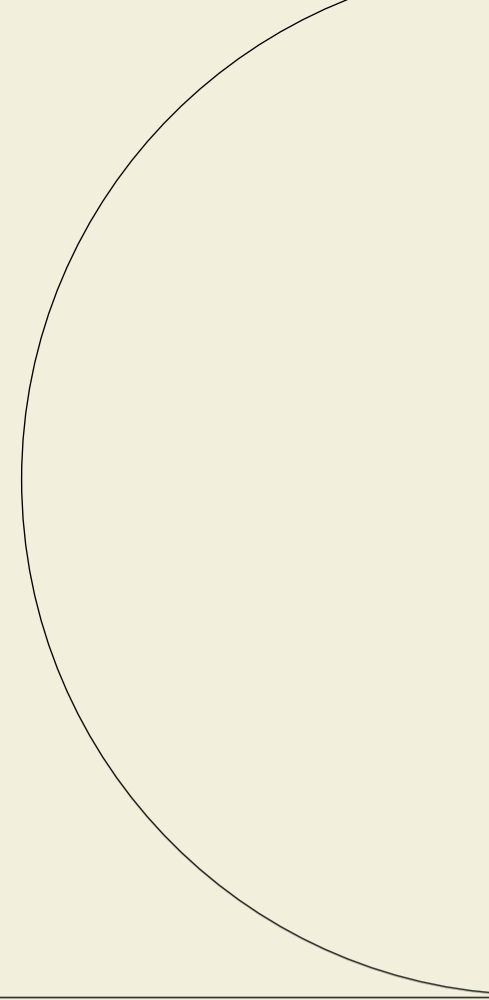
Design an onboarding plan that includes introductions to key stakeholders, an overview of current AEDIJ efforts, and insights into the organizational culture and context. This onboarding should also familiarize the AEDIJ hire with specific departmental functions and challenges.

### Establish Feedback and Mentorship Structures

Regularly scheduled feedback sessions and mentorship opportunities are crucial for the AEDIJ specialist's growth and adjustment. These support structures also help align AEDIJ goals with broader organizational objectives.

### Promote a Culture of Collaboration and Inclusion

AEDIJ work affects the entire organization, so ensure that all teams and departments understand the role and feel included in the AEDIJ journey. Support efforts to integrate the AEDIJ professional's role into each department, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and alignment.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR PREPARING THE ROLE

### Role Clarity and Organizational Needs

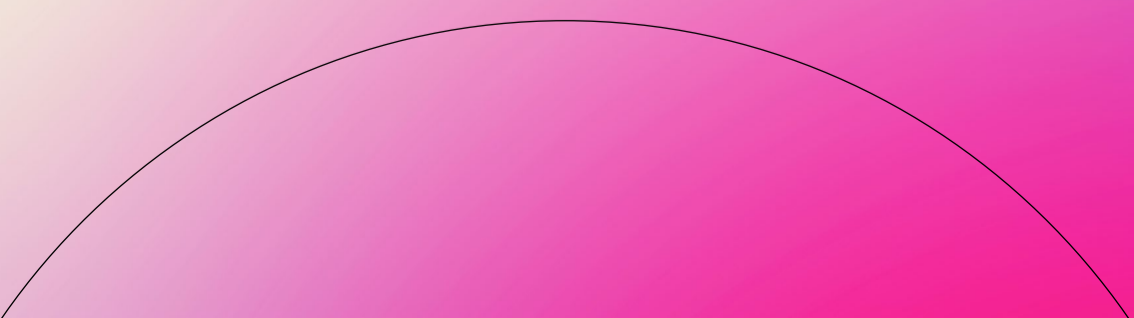
What specific needs and objectives will this role address, and how does it support our organizational goals?

How can we define this role to balance both structure and flexibility for meaningful AEDIJ contributions?

### Resource and Leadership Readiness

Are we prepared to fully support the AEDIJ hire with adequate resources, budget, and leadership commitment?

How will we manage and adapt resources to ensure the AEDIJ hire can sustain their work effectively?



## Employee Experience and Integration

How are we considering the AEDIJ hire's experience, needs, and expectations in the creation and filling of this role?

How can we prepare our current staff to support and collaborate with the AEDIJ professional to create a cohesive organizational culture?

## Expectation Management and Adaptability

Are we open to the AEDIJ role evolving beyond initial expectations based on the professional's insights and feedback?

How will we communicate and manage expectations to allow this role the space to develop and bring transformative impact?

### Clearly Communicate the Role's Purpose to All Staff

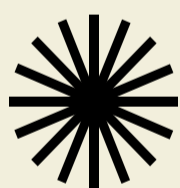
Share the goals, responsibilities, and importance of the AEDIJ role with all teams to build awareness, alignment, and support.

### Develop a Robust Onboarding Plan

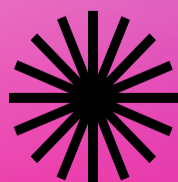
Implement a comprehensive onboarding process that includes introductions, resources, and access to mentors and support networks.

### Encourage Continuous Feedback and Development

Establish regular feedback mechanisms and provide professional development opportunities, reinforcing that AEDIJ work is a shared, evolving responsibility within the organization.



# NEXT STEPS



# Additional Resources

## Books, Articles, and Websites for Further Reading:

The ARC Hubs resource library provides a curated list of recommended readings and resources for further education on creating safer spaces for racialized individuals and supports for personal learning objectives. It includes books, articles, and websites that offer valuable insights and guidance on diversity, equity, and inclusion: <https://centre-arc-hub.ca/docs/>

Contact Information for Organizational Support:

Note that supports should never be brought in to be louder than the experience and expertise of staff already within the organization. The key word here is support.

There are many types of support that organizations can seek out when they are prepared to do so. This includes consultants, facilitators, professional associations, advocacy groups, and counseling services that specialize in supporting racialized individuals in the workplace. The ARC Hub hosts an ever-growing roster of experts meant to centralize this type of supports which you can find here: <https://centre-arc-hub.ca/arc-hub-roster-of-experts/>

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